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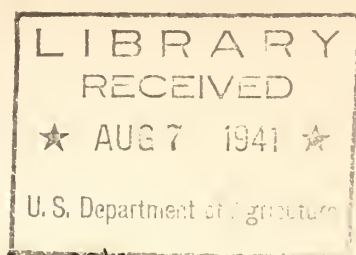
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
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AGRICULTURAL ITEMS FROM THE 1940 CENSUS

Tabulations from the 1940 Census covering the country as a whole have been released for many important agricultural items. In some categories tabulations by States and counties have been completed.

The Census reveals various trends in American agriculture during the 1930-1940 decade. The farm population seems not to have changed greatly in that period although it has changed with respect to the age picture. There are fewer children and more old people on farms now than ten years ago.

The total number of farm tenants declined slightly during the period, a development which is probably to be associated with the decrease of sharecroppers in the South. Some parts of the country which were hit by droughts or depression showed a decline in the number of owners and an increase in tenancy. There has been a rather striking increase in ownership of small part-time farms in the vicinity of large cities.

In respect to size, there has been a marked increase in the number of small farms -- those under ten acres. This was especially the case in New England and in many of the eastern and southern States. Many farms in the West and South have been consolidated. Partly due to this consolidation and to the exit of sharecroppers, the total number of farms in the country declined about 3 percent in the ten years. The total area of land in farms, however, showed an increase of 7.5 percent.

The lower level of prices in 1940, as compared with 1930, was reflected in a 30 percent decline in total valuation of farm land and buildings.



Comparison with 1935

The figures released by the 1940 Census make comparisons mostly with 1930. An agricultural census was taken in 1935, however, and when last year's figures are compared with 1935 they show declines in number of farms, in farm population, and in various related figures. Students of these statistics have not yet arrived at any satisfactory explanation of some of these apparent losses. Whether the Census count of small farms was more complete in 1935 than in 1940 or whether other more nominal than real factors enter into the picture must be determined by further study.

It may thus be borne in mind that offhand comparisons between 1940 and 1935 may lead a student of the situation to some questionable conclusions unless he is in a position to weigh the statistics.

Number of Farms

The 1940 Census shows 6,096,799 farms in the United States, compared with 6,288,648 farms enumerated by the 1930 Census, a decline in the ten years of 3.1 percent.

With respect to number of farms in the various size groups, the three large categories are those from 20 to 49 acres each, 50 to 99 acres, and 100 to 174 acres. Each of these groups contains about a million and a quarter farms. The size group 175 to 499 acres numbers slightly under a million farms. Above these brackets the number of farms diminishes as the size increases.

Texas has the largest number of farms -- 418,002, according to the 1940 Census. Mississippi has 291,000 farms; North Carolina 278,000; Missouri 256,000; Kentucky 252,000; Tennessee 247,000; Ohio 233,000; Alabama 231,000; Arkansas 216,000; Illinois and Iowa each 213,000; Minnesota 197,000; Michigan and Wisconsin each 187,000; Indiana 184,000; Oklahoma 179,000; Virginia 174,000; Pennsylvania 169,000; Kansas 156,000; New York 153,000; and California 132,000.



Land in Farms

The United States has 1,060,852,374 acres of land in its farms, says the 1940 Census. This is an increase of 7.5 percent over 1930, when 987 million acres were in farms. This apparent increase in land in farms is due in large part to a change in the listing of grazing land as farm land.

Total land area of the United States is given by the Census as 2,977,128 square miles, which is equal to approximately 1,905 million acres.

Size of Farms

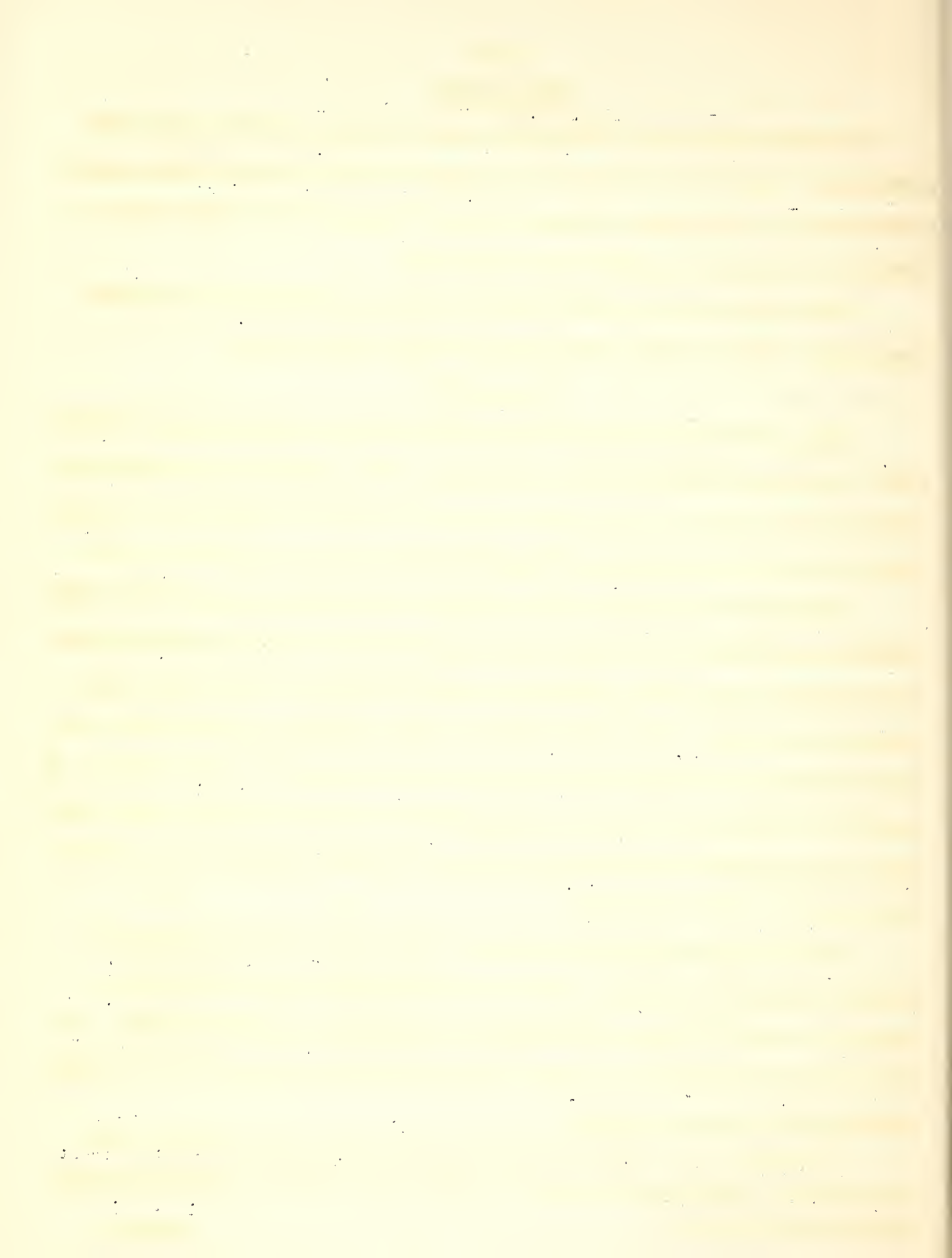
Farms of less than ten acres increased 41 percent in number between 1930 and 1940. The greatest increases were, in general, in the industrial and mining areas where farm living can be combined with work off the farm. The increases are particularly noticeable in New England and in many of the Eastern and Southern States.

The Bureau of the Census in its summary of statistics on size of farms says, "Although consolidation into larger farm operating units occurred in all sections of the country, it was most pronounced in the Great Plains, in the Western Range area and in the South. In the Great Plains, lands abandoned by farmers driven out by the succession of drought years apparently were taken over by other farmers. In the States having large acreages of public domain, some lands formerly used as open range are now handled on a lease basis and are, therefore, included for the first time as land in farms and ranches.

"In the South, a substantial increase in the land operated by owners and managers, coupled with a sharp decline in the number of croppers and tenants, indicates a trend to larger units operated by owners and plantation managers. In the three major geographic divisions in this general area, farms of 20 to 49 acres decreased 22.4 percent in number..

"In 1940, farms of 500 acres and over, while less than 5 percent of the total number, included nearly half of the total land in farms and over 15 percent of the total valuation."







The Western States show the largest average size of farms. Wyoming leads in this respect, the average size of Wyoming farms or ranches being 1,866 acres. The average size of farms in Arizona is 1,389 acres, in New Mexico 1,139 acres; Montana 1,111 acres; Nevada 1,059 acres; Iowa 160 acres; Kansas 308 acres; New York 112 acres and California 230 acres.

The smallest average is in Massachusetts -- 60.8 acres. The Southeastern States have relatively small farms; for instance, in the East South Central State, the average is only 75.3 acres.

Other figures show that Texas has 3,360 ranches of over 5,000 acres each. Montana, New Mexico and Wyoming each list more than 1,000 ranches of over 5,000 acres.

#### Value of Farms

The 1940 total valuation of farms (land and buildings) was \$33,642,000,000 a decline of almost 30 percent from the 1930 valuation of \$47,880,000,000. Since the physical property was virtually the same, the decline in values must be attributed to the lower level of prices in 1940 as compared with ten years previously.

#### Tenure

The figures on farm tenure as shown by the Census are:

	<u>1940</u>	<u>1930</u>
Number of farms	6,096,799	6,288,648
Full owners	3,084,138	2,911,644
Part owners	615,039	656,750
Managers	36,351	55,889
Total number of tenants	2,361,271	2,664,365
Croppers	541,291	776,278



The South especially showed a drop in number of tenants in the decade -- mainly a decrease in sharecroppers. Mississippi recorded an increase of 11,000 owners since 1930, but a decrease of 33,000 in tenants. In Arkansas the number of farm owners went up 13,000 but tenants decreased 37,000, of which 27,000 were sharecroppers. Oklahoma had an increase of 2,000 owners but a decline of 27,000 tenants, of which about 16,000 were croppers.

An example of drought effects shows up in North Dakota, where number of farm owners decreased 5,000 while tenants increased 6,000. In Nebraska, number of owners dropped 8,000 but there were 3,000 more tenants.

Many of these changes in farm tenure are closely bound up with developments among sharecroppers in the South and among small part-time farmers adjacent to industrial centers throughout the East and North. The latter areas generally show an increase in number of owners, reflecting the rise of part-time farming by men working in factories. For example, in North Carolina, there was a drop of 14,000 in the number of tenants, but an increase, largely around the mill towns and cities, of 17,000 owners.

Figures on total number of tenants show a decrease since 1930, but students of this question are of the opinion that study of the detailed figures in what may be called good farming areas of the country, where the sharecropper system does not exist, will reveal that tenancy has increased somewhat. More adequate analysis of the trends in respect to land tenure must await final figures.

#### Crops

The 1940 Census, on the basis of crops grown and harvested in 1939, listed 301 million acres in crops. The like figure in 1929 was 345 million acres.



Corn accounted for approximately 87 million acres, compared with 98 million acres a decade previously. Wheat occupied approximately  $50\frac{1}{2}$  million acres as against 62 million the decade before, and hay 66 million acres compared with 68 million.

Cotton showed the greatest shrinkage among the principal crops, with approximately 23 million acres recorded for 1939 as against  $43\frac{1}{4}$  million acres in 1929.

The production of cotton in 1939 was listed as 11,481,300 bales compared with 14,574,405 bales in 1929.

In the case of corn harvested for grain although acreage dropped during the decade to 77 million from 83 million, production increased, being placed by the Census at 2,311,000,000 bushels in 1939 as against 2,131,000,000 bushels in 1929.

Wheat production was down to 708 million bushels compared with 800 million in 1929.

The hay crop remained fairly constant between the two dates, being roughly 82 million tons in 1939 and 85 million tons in 1929.

According to the 1940 Census, Iowa maintained its status as the greatest corn State with nearly 9 million acres of corn harvested for grain in 1939 and an output of 470 million bushels. Illinois came second with  $7\frac{1}{2}$  million acres and a crop of 382 million bushels.

Kansas led the wheat States with  $9\frac{1}{4}$  million acres and a crop of 112 million bushels. Its nearest competitor was North Dakota, with approximately 7 million acres and an output of 69 million bushels. The latter is, of course, primarily a spring wheat-growing State whereas Kansas produces largely winter wheat.





Oklahoma produced 58 million bushels of wheat, Washington 44 million, Montana 40 million, Illinois 38 million, Ohio 37 million, Nebraska 34 million, and Texas 28 million.

Texas is the great cotton State, the Census reporting 8 million acres and a production of 2,724,000 bales in 1939. The next largest cotton State was Mississippi with an output of 1,533,000 bales, followed by Arkansas with 1,351,000 bales, Georgia 905,000 bales and South Carolina 850,000 bales.

The leading tobacco State, North Carolina, had a crop of 716 million pounds, followed by Kentucky with 324, million pounds.

#### Livestock

The rise of mechanical power on American farms is reflected in the continued decline in number of workstock. The 1940 Census recorded 10,087,000 horses in the country as compared with 13,383,000 in 1930. The number of colts was also substantially smaller. Mules numbered 3,844,000 as compared with 5,354,000 ten years previously.

The number of cattle and calves totaled 60,675,000 compared with 54,250,000 in 1930. The increase was largely in beef cattle. The total number of dairy cows and heifers milked in 1939 was given as 21,936,000 compared with 21,124,000 ten years before. Texas ranks first in cattle, with more than  $6\frac{1}{4}$  million head, Iowa comes next with nearly  $4\frac{1}{4}$  million head, and Wisconsin third with nearly  $3\frac{1}{4}$  million head.

The hogs in the country numbered 34 million, according to the 1940 Census, which compares with slightly under 33 million in 1930. The spread of the hog population to the Central and Southern States is indicated by the fact that in 1940 the West North Central States held only a third of the hogs whereas ten





years before they had roughly half. Iowa is the leading swine State, having 4,902,000 head in the spring of 1940. The next largest hog producers are Illinois with 2,951,000 head, Indiana 2,333,000 and Missouri 2,347,000.

Sheep and lambs in 1940 totaled 40,129,000 compared with 41,780,000 recorded in the 1930 Census. Texas is also the largest sheep-raising State, having 3,488,000 head, according to the 1940 Census. The next largest sheep States are Wyoming and Montana each with 3 million head.

Wisconsin lead the dairy States, having produced 1,321,000,000 gallons of milk in 1939. Minnesota ranks <sup>second</sup> with 866 million gallons and New York third with 838 million gallons.

#### Poultry

The 1940 Census summary on poultry noted that "the production of poultry and eggs in the United States has hardly kept pace with the increase in population during the last ten years. While the number of persons increased about 7 percent between 1930 and 1940, the only major item of poultry production to show an increase greater than this was turkeys raised. The production of chickens and chicken eggs was somewhat lower at the end of the decade.

"The number of turkeys raised in 1939 was only 11 million higher than in 1929, the figures shown by the Census being roughly 28 million and 17 million respectively."

The increase in turkey raising occurred in the Northern States from New England to the Pacific Coast. Some of these states are raising  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times as many turkeys as ten years ago.

Notwithstanding that the chickens raised in 1939 numbered only 660 million as against 673 million in 1929, there was a 30 percent increase in the number



of chickens in the Atlantic Seaboard States. New England gained roughly 50 percent, the Middle Atlantic States about 10 percent and the South Atlantic States over 40 percent. The number of chickens declined in other sections of the country.

Egg production for the Nation as a whole was smaller by some 300 million dozens in 1939 than in 1929, with the decline fairly general throughout the country except in the Northeast. New England showed a gain of almost 50 percent. The States along the Pacific lost about 20 percent during this period.

Iowa is still the leading poultry State, with 43 million chickens and 168 million dozen eggs produced in 1939. Texas ranks second with 36 million chickens and an output of 158 million dozen eggs. Other large poultry producing States are Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Minnesota and Pennsylvania.

The largest turkey raising State is Texas with 3,443,000 birds in 1939, followed by Minnesota with 2,508,000, and Iowa with 1,436,000.

#### Farm Population

The Census placed the total farm population of the United States at 30,475,206 on April 1, 1940. This compared with 30,445,350 ten years previously. The preliminary figures thus show virtually no change in farm population in the decade. In 1920 the farm population numbered 31,614,269. The farm population comprises all persons living on farms, without regard to occupation.

Some sections, notably the Pacific Coast and certain Western States, showed some increase in farm population. The largest decreases were in the Plains States of the Central West. The total farm population of the West North Central States decreased by 354,725, or 7 percent, between 1930 and 1940, the drop resulting largely from Dust Bowl conditions. The West South Central States showed a decrease of 254,423 or 4.8 percent, practically all in Oklahoma and Texas.



The number of persons per farm declined in the decade from 5.1 to 4.9 in North Dakota, in South Dakota from 4.7 to 4.2, in Nebraska from 4.5 to 4.1 and in Kansas from 4.3 to 3.9.

These declines in farm population in the States which were hard hit by drought reflect the harsh conditions which led to some consolidation of farms and to some actual abandonment of land.

In connection with farm population, some interest attaches to the changing age picture. The 1940 Census shows a materially older population on the farms than was the case ten years earlier. The number of children under 20 showed the rather startling decline of approximately 1,400,000 in the decade. On the other hand, the working age group, 20 to 64 years old, increased roughly one million. The upper age group, over 65, increased by approximately 400,000.

The presumption is that these figures for age groups reflect a slowing down of migration away from the farms, despite the droughts.





TOTAL FARM POPULATION

Division and State	Total Farm Population	
	1940	1930
United States .....	30,475,206	30,445,350
Geographic Divisions:		
New England .....	615,954	573,251
Middle Atlantic .....	1,762,297	1,707,719
East North Central .....	4,635,460	4,488,933
West North Central .....	4,713,410	5,068,135
South Atlantic .....	5,997,604	5,898,176
East South Central .....	5,289,478	5,095,096
West South Central .....	5,071,989	5,326,412
Mountain .....	1,118,910	1,138,718
Pacific .....	1,270,104	1,148,910
New England:		
Maine .....	177,106	170,995
New Hampshire .....	71,266	62,850
Vermont .....	107,066	112,904
Massachusetts .....	140,362	123,255
Rhode Island .....	16,241	16,477
Connecticut .....	103,913	86,770
Middle Atlantic:		
New York .....	703,606	719,929
New Jersey .....	146,459	131,096
Pennsylvania .....	912,232	856,694
East North Central:		
Ohio .....	1,083,619	1,013,229
Indiana .....	818,220	813,007
Illinois .....	976,964	999,249
Michigan .....	872,775	782,394
Wisconsin .....	883,882	881,054
West North Central:		
Minnesota .....	915,230	895,349
Iowa .....	930,821	977,906
Missouri .....	1,126,871	1,114,484
North Dakota .....	327,871	397,294
South Dakota .....	307,762	390,205
Nebraska .....	498,756	585,701
Kansas .....	606,099	707,196

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TOTAL FARM POPULATION (Cont'd)

Division and State	Total Farm Population	
	1940	1930
<b>South Atlantic:</b>		
Delaware .....	45,724	46,530
Maryland .....	244,900	237,456
Dist. of Columbia .....	380	435
Virginia .....	926,280	950,757
West Virginia .....	532,512	449,114
North Carolina .....	1,654,123	1,599,918
South Carolina .....	915,597	916,471
Georgia .....	1,369,719	1,418,514
Florida .....	308,369	278,981
<b>East South Central:</b>		
Kentucky .....	1,262,943	1,176,524
Tennessee .....	1,276,437	1,215,452
Alabama .....	1,344,349	1,340,277
Mississippi .....	1,405,749	1,362,843
<b>West South Central:</b>		
Arkansas .....	1,113,662	1,119,464
Louisiana .....	857,475	830,606
Oklahoma .....	935,241	1,024,070
Texas .....	2,165,611	2,352,272
<b>Mountain:</b>		
Montana .....	175,271	204,594
Idaho .....	203,616	188,365
Wyoming .....	72,723	73,152
Colorado .....	252,958	282,827
New Mexico .....	178,682	158,631
Arizona .....	115,349	98,995
Utah .....	104,459	115,713
Nevada .....	15,852	16,441
<b>Pacific:</b>		
Washington .....	339,950	304,737
Oregon .....	259,638	223,667
California .....	670,516	620,506

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